



All Glorꝝ be to God.

THOMAS *Unworthy Bishop of Bath and Wells, to the Minister of*
wisbeth a Multiplication of Mercy, and Peace,
and Love.

Reverend Brother,

Blessed be God, who hath put such a thing as this into the King's heart, in imitation of the divine goodness, to receive into His Gracious Protection the French Protestants, who have lately taken refuge in His Kingdom, and to grant His Letters Patents, the second time, to license and authorize them to ask and receive the alms and Charitable contributions of His loving Subjects, and to require and command all Bishops to give a particular recommendation and command to all Parsons, Vicars and Curates within their Dioceses, to advance this so pious and Charitable a work.

Since then His Majesty is pleased, Chiefly to recommend the pursuit of these His Letters Patents, to the Paternal care and Inspection of the Bishops, God forbid that I, who am lifted up above my Betters, to the Pastoral Chair, should fail, in fully answering the intentions of so Royal and God-like a Charity.

A.

You.

You well know the last time His Majesty's Letters Patents were sent down, in behalf of these our Calamitous Neighbours, what unchristian reports were spread about the Country concerning them, which made the Charity of many grow stark Cold, and which carried in them two palpable Characters of the Devil that invented them: the *Lyer* was not onely notorious in them, but the *Murtherer* also, Insomuch that when the *poor and the needy cried for bread*, the enemy of mankind endeavoured by this means, to withhold it from them. God give Repentance to all persons, who did either raise, or propagate, or credit those Diabolical reports; God avert from their Souls that ~~not~~ which is threatned to them who are ~~not~~ *grieved for the affliction of Joseph.*

I do therefore require you, deliberately and affectionately to publish and declare, the tenour of His Majesty's Letters Patents in your Parish; and the rather because they are so excellently Penn'd, that the deliberate and affectionate publication of them, will furnish all people with very proper motives and inducements to an Enlarged Charity, and will sufficiently confute all those Murtherous lies, which have been forg'd in Hell to obstruct it. For you will see that the persons commended to our tender regard, are French, who have here taken Refuge, and in that respect are *strangers in the land*, and they are Protestants too, such who profess the same Belief with us; you will see that they are distressed, and reduced to extream wants, both they and their Families, that their Condition is deplorable, that a great many are still under pressing necessities, that since the last Collection, Great numbers have, and do still daily come over, that the publick stock collected by the last Briel has been faithfully expended, and that stock now failing, without farther supplies they must inevitably perish; and what shall now be contributed, we have all the Reason in the world to be assured, shall be as faithfully expended as the former, and that too without any distinction.

Upon these and the like considerations, I require you, earnestly to persuade, exhort and stir up the people committed to your care, to contribute freely and chearfully towards the Relief of these distressed Christians, and I beseech you to enforce your exhortations with your own Example, and as far as your Condition permits to give

give very liberal Alms your self. We are enjoyned by God *to doe good to all men, especially to those who are of the Household of Faith*, and when we see such great numbers of our Brethren, in so very great want, Charity obliges all Christians to be fervent in their Prayers for them, and not onely to pray for them, but according to their abilities to be **bountifull** towards them.

This is a duty which frequently occurs in holy Scripture: our Translation calls it *Hospitality*; but the Original signifies *love to Strangers*: the Primitive Christians were most Exemplary in this kind of Charity, and the Apostle urges this powerfull argument to encourage us to it. *Be not forgetfull to entertain Strangers: for thereby some have Entertained Angels unawares. Remember them that are in bonds as bound with them: and them which suffer adversity as being your selves also in the body.* It is a great honour to have *Angels*, as *Abraham* had, for our Guests. But our Saviour offers us a greater, which is to Entertain distressed Christian *Strangers*, whom he calls His *Brethren*. For in taking such *Strangers* into our houses, we take in our Saviour himself, who is *God blessed for ever*: so that were I put to my Choice, I had much rather Entertain the *Stranger* than the *Angel*.

God of his Infinite mercy open all our bowels towards these distressed *Strangers*, and *Brethren* of Christ, that in the great day of separation Christ may set us at *His right hand*, and say thoe transporting words to us, *Come ye blessed of my Father, Inherit the Kingdom prepared for you from the Foundation of the World, for I was a stranger and ye took me in.*

From the Palace in Wells.
April 14th, 1688.

Your affectionate

Friend and Brother,

Tho. Bath and Wells.